

Guidelines to Determine Which Students Should Participate in the New Jersey Statewide Assessment Through the Alternate Proficiency Assessment

The New Jersey APA was developed for two purposes:

- To measure the progress of a **small percentage of students with disabilities** who cannot participate in the regular statewide assessments even with accommodations.
- To ensure that the educational results for all students are included in the statewide accountability system at the individual, school, district, and state levels.

The Individualized Education program (IEP) team makes decisions about state assessment participation. The IEP must determine **for each content area assessed**, whether an individual will participate in the general assessment or the APA. The New Jersey special education rules and regulations specify that:

Students with disabilities shall participate in the Alternate Proficiency in each content area where the nature of the student's disability is so severe that the student is not receiving instruction in any of the knowledge and skills measured by the general Statewide assessment and the student cannot complete any of the types of questions on the assessment in the content area(s) even with accommodations and modifications (N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.10(a)2).

The USDOE non-regulatory guidance regarding achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, referenced above, provides further clarification regarding student eligibility for participation in the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The guidance states that:

“only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be assessed based on alternate achievement standards....the Department intended the term “students with the most significant cognitive disabilities” to include that small number of students who are (1) within one or more of the existing categories of disability under the IDEA (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.); and (2) whose cognitive impairments may prevent them from attaining grade-level achievement standards, even with the very best instruction.”

The attached chart provides the individual determinations that must be made to determine student eligibility for participation in the APA.

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Student Name: _____

General assessment given at the student's grade level:
NJ ASK5_____ NJ ASK6_____ NJ ASK7_____

NJ ASK3_____ NJ ASK4_____
GEPA_____ HSPA_____

Content Area Question	Language Arts Literacy		Mathematics		Science*	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Is the nature of the student's cognitive disability severe?						
2. Is the student's cognitive disability so severe that the student is not receiving instruction in any of the knowledge and skills measured by the general statewide assessment?						
3. Is the student's cognitive disability so severe that the student cannot complete any of the types of questions on the assessment in the content area, even with accommodations and modifications?						
4a. Is the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) aligned to grade level New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards through modified expectations and/or access skills that promote social interaction, independence, self-determination, and generalization.						

* Grades 4, 8 and 11 only.

If the IEP team has answered yes to all of the questions above, the student should participate in Statewide Assessment through the Alternate Proficiency Assessment.

My signature confirms the accuracy of the information noted above.

Director or Designee

Date

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